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PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHEG #4282 1921530  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 111530Z JUL 06  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9859  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0040  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 004282

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/11/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [EG](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: IRAQ: ARAB LEAGUE TO HOST PREPARATORY MEETING  
JULY 25-28 IN CAIRO TO PLAN NATIONAL RECONCILIATION  
CONFERENCE

Classified by ECPO Counselor Catherine Hill-Herndon for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Arab League staff members shared July 11 that the League would hold a preparatory meeting of Iraqi political figures July 25-28 in Cairo to plan for a National Reconciliation Conference (NRC) in Baghdad later this summer. A maximum of 30 Iraqis from all the major Iraqi political groups are expected to attend the gathering. The participants are expected to decide a date for the NRC, the participation criteria for that meeting, logistics, and a venue. On the latter issue, Arab League staffer Lama Kassem told poloff July 11 that she believed agreement on a venue for the NRC would be difficult to reach, and that August would be too early to organize the Baghdad meeting. She predicted a September meeting at the earliest. If there was still no agreement on a date or venue, Kassem predicted, the League would choose to host less comprehensive meetings of Iraqi groups in order to build momentum for a broader NRC. She suggested that such meetings could include religious leaders, tribal sheihks, or non-governmental organizations.

¶2. (C) Kassem told poloff that at the Cairo preparatory meeting only Iraqis would attend, although staff from the UN office in Iraq (UNAMI) had been invited to participate. Delegates would break into "working groups" to address such items as confidence building measures and the meeting's final communique, Kassem said. Pointing to the recent meeting of Iraq's Neighbors held in Tehran, poloff pointed to the absence of language on support for the insurgency or a timeline for MNF-I withdrawal as positive steps that should be repeated by participants to the Arab League's meetings. Kassem believed these issues would be further explored when NEA Assistant Secretary Welch meets Amre Moussa in Cairo on July 12.  
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